

ARTICLE 401
DETROIT RIVERFRONT

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STATUS

The preparation of the riverfront portion of the Master Plan involved the collaboration of the Detroit-Wayne County Port Commission, Mayor's Committee for Industrial and Commercial Development, Department of Streets and Traffic, Housing Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works, Department of Water Supply, Civic Center Commission, City Controller, Wayne County Stadium Authority, and the City Plan Commission.

The riverfront portion was originally adopted as part of the Master Plan by the Common Council on March 4, 1947 (J.C.C., p. 470). It covered the riverfront area from the Central Business District east to the city limits at Alter Road. The riverfront portion has been revised a number of times by action of the Common Council. A major revision resulting from the Riverfront Study of 1963 was adopted by Common Council on March 30, 1965 (J.C.C., p. 666). This revision enlarged the area of concern to include all of the riverfront. Other revisions were adopted by Common Council on March 7, 1972 (J.C.C., p. 494-502) as part of the amendments for the Model Neighborhood area and on May 23, 1972 (J.C.C., pp. 1257-8) as part of the amendments for the Civic Center. Additional revisions were adopted by Common Council on Oct. 12, 1972 (J.C.C., pp. 2561-2563) and Feb. 27, 1973 (J.C.C., pp. 502-506) as part of the planning for the Jefferson-Chalmers Neighborhood Development Program area. The most recent revisions for the riverfront area were adopted by Common Council on May 7, 1974 (J.C.C. pp. 1041-1049) as part of the planning for the Hubbard-Richard/West Riverfront Gateway area.

401.0100 RIVERFRONT GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

401.0101 Definition and Objectives

The riverfront plan proposes development of the riverfront from the western to eastern city limits for recreational, residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses. The plan is designed to assist the city in making maximum use of its riverfront resource and to capture more fully the potential of the Detroit River as Detroit's most outstanding natural resource. A major objective of the city is to encourage and facilitate development of the riverfront by uses which derive a particular benefit from a riverfront location.

401.0102 Extent and Boundaries of Area

The riverfront development area consists of over 5000 acres fronting on the Detroit River and the Rouge River between Schaefer Highway and Alter Road extending north to Fort Street west of the Central Business District and Jefferson east of the Central Business District. The entire river frontage includes ten miles on the Detroit River, three miles on the east side of the Old Rouge Channel and two miles on the west side of Old Rouge Channel.

401.0103 Recreational Aspects

Five major areas have been designated to include recreational development:

Gabriel Richard Park, extended west of Belle Isle Bridge is suitable primarily as a landscaped area and reviewing ground for motor boat races.

Extension of Memorial Park eastward to St. Jean will provide space (including part of Water Works Park) suitable for varied recreational use. Under the plan the area will contain a number of marinas (both public and private). Other private boat yards will remain for storage and servicing pleasure boats.

Extension of Algonquin Park from Conner Creek to the Marine Hospital provides an area for general recreational uses and expansion of pleasure boat facilities. A marina for small boats should be developed in the western portion of the Grayhaven subdivision. Algonquin Park will be developed as a park and playfield area with an outdoor swimming pool. The mouth of Fox Creek is suitable for development of a public marina. The Bayview Yacht Club, at the foot of Clairpointe, which borders Algonquin Park on the west is compatible with the general development plan and will continue present operations.

The approach to the Ambassador Bridge should be developed as an attractive international gateway and a river activity observation park shall be developed under the bridge. River activity observation parks should also be provided at other points along the shore where the river can be made accessible to the general public. Six locations are proposed along the riverfront in the general area between the Ambassador Bridge and Mt. Elliott. Adjacent to these park areas, restaurants and entertainment areas can also capture the unique and attractive river environment and expand the variety of opportunities for the community.

These parks should eventually be part of a series of recreation areas located along the riverfront, and should be linked together and to adjacent communities and major activity centers wherever possible by pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths.

401.0104 Park Drive, Pedestrian Walkways and Bicycle Paths

A system of thoroughfares with Park Drive Treatment, Pedestrian Walkways and Bicycle Paths should be developed to provide safe, convenient, and pleasant access to, and connect parks, residential areas, and other community facilities. The thoroughfares would also provide a pleasant driving experience for motorists and stimulate private and public development.

The specific locations of the thoroughfares with Park Drive Treatment, and the Pedestrian Walkways and Bicycle Paths are shown on the Future General Land Use map and on the map entitled Coordinated System of Trafficways.

401.0105 Residential Uses

Bordering on the riverfront are some of the finest locations for homes and apartments in the city. These possibilities have been recognized in such residential developments as the Whittier and River Terrace.

In addition to the apartment area around the Whittier and the single family area in the Berry Subdivision, the map shows the area east of Memorial Park, the Downtown East Riverfront from the Civic Center to the Chrysler Freeway extended, and the Downtown West Riverfront from Cobo Hall to Riverside Park as suitable for apartment development. Apartment structures along the riverfront should be well spaced so that their landscaped grounds will be, in effect, a part of the park development.

On the far east side, a small area south of Riverside between Brush-Ford Park and the Marine Hospital site should be developed with apartments of a fairly high density, in a manner which will provide public access to the Riverfront, and relate to the

adjoining recreation area. Klėnk Island, to the north is also suitable for apartments and townhouses.

Apartment structures along the riverfront should be well spaced so that their landscaped grounds will be, in effect, a part of the park development.

The frontage along East Jefferson, from the Chrysler Freeway to Mt. Elliott should be developed with apartment structures and compatible commercial uses, the residents having access to the river via pedestrian walkways.

401.0106 Industrial Uses

Portions of the Detroit riverfront should be utilized for industrial uses on three types of industrial land:

1. Owner-Use Port Terminals
2. For-Hire Port Terminals
3. General Industry. This can be either light industry or heavy industry. General industry located on the riverfront should include industries which use raw water in their processes, ancillary services to port terminals and non-water related industries.

401.0107 Institutional Uses

Major institutional developments indicated for the riverfront area are:

1. Fort Wayne to serve as an expanded historical monument area
2. The Civic Center (see Section 402.0100)
3. The Coast Guard and Immigration Center at the foot of Mt. Elliott
4. The Brodhead Naval Armory east of Gabriel Richard Park
5. Waterworks Park

401.0108 Commercial Uses

Major commercial developments indicated for the riverfront area are:

1. Major Shopping Centers

A comparison shopping center is indicated at Junction-West Fort. Convenience shopping centers are indicated at the intersection of East Jefferson with Grand Boulevard, St. Jean, and Chalmers.

2. General Commercial Areas

These areas are indicated at locations along Pleasant Street, Fort Street, and East Jefferson.

3. Special Commercial-Residential Areas

Special commercial-residential areas are indicated just east of and west of the Civic Center, to take advantage of the river frontage, along the north side of East Jefferson east of the Chrysler Freeway, and along Vernor, near the north end of the Ambassador Bridge. These areas should be developed with a major office headquarters complex, an international gateway, or a major spectator sport or convention facility of regional significance and supporting uses such as hotels, restaurants, major institutions, medium-rise offices, and apartments.

401.0180 Other Policies Relating to the Riverfront

Refer to Chapter II, General Urban Policies; and Chapter III, Urban Systems Policies; for city-wide policies that also apply to the Riverfront. Chapter IV, Urban Areas Policies, also includes additional policies for special areas along the Riverfront; see the sections on the Detroit Civic Center, the Detroit Model Neighborhood, and the West Riverfront Gateway.

401.0190 The Maps

For current information see the maps in the City Plan Commission offices entitled Riverfront Park Drive and Future General Land Use - Detroit Master Plan. A copy of the Future General Land Use map is included at the back of this document.